

Environmental Education Day

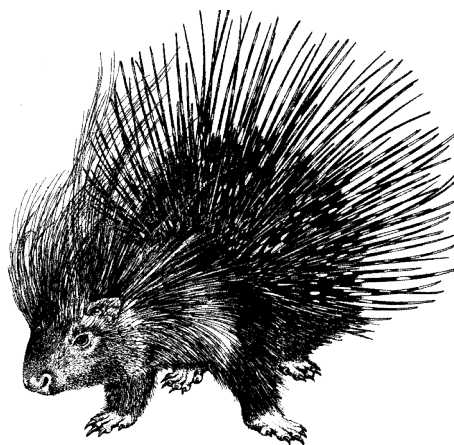
1st Grade General Education

Echo Lake, Room 9

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Rationale:

We decided to teach a simple, connected topic that will generate opportunities for visual and kinesthetic learning. Our brainstorming sessions led to the idea of teaching about trees, and connecting the topics of life cycles and habitats to a single “tree of learning” that we will build as a class throughout the day. Part of the reason that we chose trees was to capitalize on the knowledge of the first graders, who are completing a science unit about bean sprouts and the bean sprout life cycle – specifically looking at the parts of plants. Our lesson plan incorporates kinesthetic, visual, and aural learning and covers literacy, music, movement, science, and math under a topic that students are already somewhat familiar with.

We begin our environmental educational day by having the first graders color in some leaves and write their names on them. We can use the leaves to start talking about trees and connecting students’ prior knowledge to what we’ll be learning throughout the day. We also use the leaves to learn student names, and we later add the leaves to our tree of learning (some will be affixed to the canopy, and some will represent fallen leaves). Once everyone is on the same page, and the students are aware that there are four guest teachers invading their classroom for the day, we can start capitalizing on student curiosities surrounding the natural world, and tap into their love of music and wiggling. Kat and Cleo incorporate our kinesthetic learning experiences within their discussion and explanation of tree life cycles. They also give students the opportunity to practice handwriting by providing students with a life cycle labeling activity. Noah will sing a song about animals in a tree because young students learn and remember many things when aided by melody and repetition. Rachel will read aloud a book about animals that live in a tree, aptly named *Who Lives in a Tree*, and will help students connect their reading comprehension to a literal paper tree (The Tree of Learning) to which they will affix photos of fuzzy, woodland creatures.

Learning Targets:

Learning Targets	Evidence of Learning
•Students will understand that the way leaves look depends on the trees they come from. (Concept) (If we talk about which trees they come from we can do this)	•Students will talk about the types of leaves they recognize from different trees.
•Students will be able to make observations about the characteristics of leaves. (Skill)	•Students will sort their hand-colored leaves into piles according to similar characteristics. (Who Has? Game)
•Students will be able to label the stages of a tree life cycle. (Fact & Skill) •Students will understand that a tree has a life cycle. (Concept)	•Students will correctly label the stages of the tree life cycle using the Tree Life Cycle handout. •Students will act out the life cycle of a tree while listening to a story about the life, growth, and demise of an oak tree (e.g. acorn → log)
•Students will understand that trees are habitats for different animals. (Concept) •Students will listen to a song for specific information. (Skill)	•Students will affix photos of animals to appropriate places on the Tree of Learning. •Students will hold out their respective woodland creatures when they hear the animal name in the song.

Assessments:

Assessment of learning targets will include both formal and informal methods of gathering evidence of learning. Below are listed the planned methods for assessment:

- **Informal Assessments**

- Anecdotal Evidence during “Who has...?” activity (students are making observations about leaves having different characteristics that help us identify what kind of tree they belong to). The assessment is informal because student teachers will be noting whether or not students mention shapes, sizes, and colors.
- Assessing where students have placed animals in the tree will help determine whether or not students have grasped that trees are habitats for animals. Students will place birds in nests, chipmunks in holes, raccoons in branches, etc.
- Final Conference/Debrief with cooperating teacher in which she will provide observations of students (behavior, learning, dispositions) throughout the day.

- **Formal Assessment**

- Tree Life Cycle worksheet. Students will label the stages of a tree’s life cycle. This assessment will show whether or not students have grasped the sequence of the various stages of a tree’s life cycle.

Through these formal and informal assessment methods, we will gather a broad yet clear picture of student learning. The outcome of our assessments will help inform our future instruction of these topics, as well as provide us with ideas for what kind of lessons we might hypothetically follow up with if given additional class time with this group.

Special Needs:

Cleo will write.

Technology:

We will use the **document camera** to show students the differences between leaves up close. Other than this, we do not expect to use any specific technologies to enhance our lesson plan.

Schedule:

Materials Needed	Time/Teacher	Description of Activities
Coloring leaves, Introductions, Read Aloud: 60 minutes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pre-cut Leaves •Math Boxes •Coloring Materials 	9:00-9:15am All Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Coloring activity: Students color in pre-cut leaves. These leaves represent different kinds of trees (). Once colored, each student will write his/her name on his/her respective leaf. These leaves will be used later on in a sorting activity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leaves •Tree of Learning 	9:15-9:30am All Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Morning Greeting: Student and teacher introductions. Students and teachers throw their leaves in a pile on the carpet. When students have their turn, they will find their leaf and tell us their name. Talk about our plans for the day (life cycle & habitats) and introduce the Tree of Learning that we will add to throughout the day.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Calendar 	9:30-9:40am Martha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Calendar: Martha will do this.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Tree in the Ancient Forest 	9:40-10:00am Noah?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Read Aloud: .
10:00am – 11:00am Kids go to Reading Groups & Recess (60 minutes)		
11:00-12:00pm THE LIFE CYCLE (60 minutes)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students' Leaves •Whiteboard •Document Camera 	11:00-11:15am Cleo & Kat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sorting Leaves into Categories: <i>Students will be able to make observations about the characteristics of leaves.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Whiteboard? •Life cycle visuals? 	11:15-11:25am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Explain the life cycle of a tree using labels and visuals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life cycle visuals? 	11:15-11:35am Cleo & Kat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students Act Out the Life Cycle of a Tree: <i>Students will be able to label the stages of a tree life cycle.</i> Kat & Cleo will explain that trees have life cycles, and that the tree goes through different stages in its life cycle, just like people do. Ask kids to think about how trees might grow to activate their zone of proximal development and draw on the prior knowledge of seeds and sprouts, which the students have been studying. Students will then act out the stages of growth as Cleo/Kat tell a story about a growing oak tree. They will use physical movements as they explain the cycle so the first graders are able to visualize it before acting it out. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Acorn (small and safe) •Sprout (growing up through the earth) •Sapling (stretching out your branches) •Mature Tree with leaves (growing big and tall and getting leaves) •Dead Tree without leaves (losing leaves, stop growing) •Fallen Log (gently lie down and lay still)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tree Life Cycle handouts 	11:35-1200pm Cleo & Kat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students will label the stages of the life cycle: <i>Students will understand that a tree has a life cycle.</i>
12:00 – 1:15pm Lunch & Teachers will put leaves on the Tree of Learning (75 minutes)		
1:15-2:00pm Trees as Habitats for Animals (45 minutes)		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Imagination 	1:15-1:20pm Rachel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use what kids have learned from tree life cycles to segue into trees as habitats. “Now that we’ve learned about the life of trees, let’s talk about how trees are a part of the lives of animals... <i>Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a place that has a lot of trees. It could be a forest, or maybe it’s somewhere in your neighborhood. Walk around – what do you see? Stop for a moment and listen closely – what do you hear? Take a deep breath through your nose – what do you smell? You see a large oak tree and you start to walk over to it. The leaves make a crunching noise under your feet. Crunch crunch crunch. You get to the oak tree and you look at it closely. You start at the bottom of the tree and see its large roots. Do you see any animals near the tree? (Wait time). You look at the tree’s wide trunk – go ahead and touch it – it’s very rough against your hand. Now look up into the branches. Do you see leaves on the tree? Are there animals in the tree? What are the animals doing? (Wait time). Now, open your eyes and come back to the classroom.”</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tree of Learning (newly adorned with leaves). 	1:20-1:25pm Noah & Rachel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students quickly pair-share and/or group share what kind of animals they imagined in the trees. Ask them to look at our tree and imagine where those animals might go.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Who Lives in a Tree? 	1:25-1:35pm Rachel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Talk about how trees are a habitat for a variety of woodland creatures. Students repeat the word. Read the book <i>Who Lives in a Tree</i> and students are asked to pay attention and see if animal they thought about live in the tree. [We will use the word habitat ad nauseum and have student repeat it when appropriate].
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tree of Learning •Animal Photos (pre cut with masking tape) •Guitar •Masking tape 	1:35-1:50pm Noah & Rachel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Habitat Song: [Attached] <i>Students will listen to a song for specific information.</i> Noah will sing a song about animals in a tree habitat to go over some of the animals from the book (foxes, raccoons, squirrels, ladybugs, butterflies, woodpeckers & owls). Rachel will pass out animals to students. Students will raise their animal picture when they hear the name of the animal in the song. •Habitat Song Reprise & Interactive Habitat Activity: <i>Students will understand that trees are habitats for different animals.</i> This time, students will stand up and affix their animals on the tree when they hear the animal name in the song. We will demonstrate by affixing a porcupine, hedgehog, and chipmunk to different areas of the habitat that might give it good protection.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tree of Learning 	1:50-2:00pm Rachel & Noah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Counting & Debrief: Students will count the animals in the tree habitat. We will ask them to count in this fashion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Show of hands, who put a squirrel in the tree? •OK – I count three hands. •How many squirrels are in our tree? •Let’s count! 1 – 2 – 3 squirrels in the tree. Well done! NB: Animals increase in number (1 fox, 1 raccoon, 2 woodpeckers, 3 squirrels, 4 owls, 5 butterflies, and 6 ladybugs).
2:00-2:15pm Recess – We prep for our next activity (15 minutes)		

2:15-2:35 Closure Activity (20 minutes)		
•Tree of Learning	2:15-2:35pm All Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Closure activity: Each teacher asks an open-ended question. These may include, but are not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cleo asks, “What do you notice about our tree?” •Kat asks, “What stage of the life cycle is our tree in?” •Noah asks, “What lives in our tree?” •Rachel asks, “Why might animals use a tree as a habitat?”
2:35 – 3:00pm (25 minutes) 1st Graders go to Library – Debrief with Martha Nichols		